



TRAFFIC ALERT

VirginiaDOT.org

RELEASE: IMMEDIATE
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VDOT BRISTOL'S WEEKLY TRAFFIC ALERT: ***September 20 - 26, 2021***

BRISTOL – In an effort to keep motorists informed, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) provides weekly information about highway construction and maintenance projects in southwestern Virginia. When traveling through highway work zones, use caution and be alert to changes in traffic patterns and slow-moving or stopped traffic.

To help motorists take the guesswork out of travel plans, call VDOT's 511 or visit <http://www.511virginia.org> for real-time traffic information.

Entries with asterisks (***) indicate the listing is new or the status of the project has changed since last week's traffic alert.

INTERSTATE PROJECTS

*****Interstate 81 – installation of overhead message boards:** Due to the installation of a large digital message board above I-81 at mile marker 74.7 in Wythe County, motorists may experience overnight delays in the Wytheville/Fort Chiswell areas from the evening of **Thursday, September 23 through the morning of September 24**. To allow time for the message boards to be installed above the interstate, Virginia State Police will assist VDOT with multiple "slow roll" closures overnight for north and southbound traffic. During a slow roll, traffic is slowed to 15 mph to allow a window of time of approximately 20 minutes to perform installation work. Motorists should be alert to signs and message boards communicating lane closures and slow roll activities during the installation. (Completion: September 24, 2021)

Interstate 81 Exit 35: A project to widen a portion of Route 107 beneath Interstate 81 at exit 35 at Chilhowie is under way. Be alert to the possibility of ramp work and periodic delays on Route 107. Watch out for highway workers in the project area. (Completion: September 2022)

*****I-81 Acceleration/deceleration lane projects:** Be alert to narrow or closed shoulders at the following locations due to projects to extend acceleration or deceleration lanes on I-81, improving safety by providing more space to slot to exit at an interchange or to accelerate before merging with interstate traffic:

- **Exit 19 northbound deceleration lane (Washington County):** narrowed shoulder northbound at exit 19 in the Abingdon area. (Completion: Spring 2022)
- **Exit 47 northbound acceleration lane (Smyth County):** north and southbound shoulder closure near exit 47 in Marion. (Completion: late July 2022)
- **Exit 84 southbound deceleration lane (Wythe County):** right shoulder closure southbound near exit 84. (Completion: November 2021)
- **Exit 67 northbound deceleration lane (Wythe County):** right shoulder closure northbound near exit 67 in Wytheville. (Completion: Spring 2022)

Interstate 81 – Exit 17: The exit 17 project includes improvements to the exit 17 northbound on and off ramps, improvements to a segment of Route 75, reconstruction and relocation of Gravel Lake Road, lengthening the I-81 southbound on ramp, and relocation of the frontage road located adjacent to the northbound exit 17 off ramp. The speed limit is 60mph through the work zone. (Completion: Fall 2022)

*****Interstate 81 – Exit 19:** The newly installed signals on Route 11 at exit 19 in Abingdon are fully operational. The exit 19 project includes realigning a portion of Empire Drive, widening a curve along the southbound off ramp, and adding traffic signals at the intersection of newly aligned Empire Drive and Route 11 and where Route 11 intersects with the end of the exit 19 southbound ramps. (Completion: Summer 2022)

Interstate 81 bridges at Atkins: A project to replace the Interstate 81 bridges near mile marker 52 in the Atkins area of Smyth County is underway. Be alert to traffic shifts through the work zone. The speed limit in the work zone is 60 mph. (Completion: Fall 2022)

*****Interstate 77 – Exit 64:** Motorists should be alert to a northbound lane closure on I-77 at exit 64 in Bland County. Lane closures will be in place weekdays through November 5. The Interstate 77 exit 64 improvement project includes maintenance repairs to the I-77 bridges over Route 61 and Clear Fork Creek and improvements to the exit 64 northbound and southbound ramps. (Completion: Spring 2023)

I-77 bridges over Cove Creek: Be alert to a project to replace the Interstate 77 bridges over Cove Creek in Wythe County, located about two miles north of Interstate 81 between mile markers 44 and 42. Motorists can expect an altered traffic pattern on southbound I-77 and periodic nighttime lane closures while work is underway. (Completion: early 2023)

*****Interstates 81 and 77 maintenance activities:** This week, be alert to the following lane closures due to maintenance activities:

Interstate 81

- Nighttime lane closure northbound near exit 45 in Marion (Smyth County) and southbound near exit 60 in Rural Retreat (Wythe County) due to bridge repairs.

- Nighttime paving northbound between mile markers 60 and 62 in Wythe County.
- 24-hour bridge repairs near mile marker 72 in Wythe County Sunday night through noon Wednesday.
- Nighttime bridge deck repairs southbound near exit 54 in Smyth County.

Interstate 77

- Nighttime northbound lane closure at Big Walker Mountain Tunnel Sunday through Thursday nights due to tunnel maintenance. All wide loads over 12-feet must stop before entering the tunnel during the nighttime lane closures.
- Nighttime paving Sunday through Thursday northbound between mile markers 25 and 29 in Wythe County.

PRIMARY HIGHWAYS AND HIGH TRAFFIC SECONDARY ROADS:

Buchanan County

***** Hurley flooding – impacted roads:** Following recent flooding in the Hurley area of Buchanan County, Routes 646 and 647 are closed to traffic. Use caution in this area and pay close attention to signs and message boards while work is underway to make needed repairs.

Route 460/121 Poplar Creek Phase A: Construction of Route 460/121 Poplar Creek Phase A is underway in Buchanan County. Impacts to motorists are minimal because the majority of the work is on a new location; however, be alert to the temporary closure of a portion of Route 604 (Poplar Creek Road). Pay close attention to signs directing traffic around the area while the closure is in place. Additionally, the project created a permanent change for Route 614 (Woods Fork). Access to the north and south ends of Route 614 are via Routes 609 (Bulls Creek Road) and Route 604 (Polar Creek Road), respectively, which connect to Route 460 west of Grundy.

Dickenson County

Route 83: Be alert to the possibility of delays along Route 83 in Wise and Dickenson counties from the intersection of Route 631 (Mill Creek) near Pound to the Buchanan County line due to a project to add paved shoulders with rumble strips and improve guardrail along Route 83. Be alert to flaggers and pilot vehicles leading motorists through the work zone. (Completion: early December 2021)

Lee County

Route 58 truck climbing lane at Powell Mountain: A project to add a truck climbing lane to Route 58 at Powell Mountain in Lee County is underway. The project will add a 1,000-foot truck climbing lane to the west side of Powell Mountain, improving safety by providing motorists a safer way to pass trucks along the steep grade. Be alert to periodic delays and watch for workers. (Completion: September 2021)

Russell County

Route 663 bridge replacement: Due to replacement of the Route 663 (Rocky Ford Road) bridge over Weaver Creek in the Artrip area of Russell County, the bridge closed in early

September and will remain closed approximately four months. The detour route during the closure is via Routes 616 and 600. (Completion: December 2021)

Smyth County

*****Route 107 improvements – Chilhowie:** A construction project is underway on Route 107 at its intersection with I-81 in the Chilhowie area of Smyth County. The project will improve how traffic moves by widening and installing a turn lane on Route 107 and the I-81 off ramps. Route 107 will be open for traffic during construction, but will be limited to one lane for a period of 3-4 weeks starting September 13. For the remainder of the project, two 11-foot-wide lanes will be open to traffic, however, there will be periodic lane closures for some operations. Due to safety concerns, pedestrian traffic will not be allowed through the work zone for the duration of the project. Motorists should expect delays during construction, and are encouraged to find alternate routes. Be alert to traffic pattern changes, obey construction signs and flaggers, and use caution when driving through the work zone. (Completion: September 2021)

Washington County

*****Route 11/19 intersection improvements in Abingdon:** This week, be alert to nightly lane closures between 8 p.m. and 6 a.m. Sunday through Thursday nights (September 19 - 24) at the intersection of Routes 11 and 19 in Abingdon. On Wednesday and Thursday nights, southbound Route 19 traffic (toward Abingdon) will be detoured onto Russell Road to access Route 11. The project will improve traffic flow by adding a second right turn lane from Route 19 onto southbound Route 11 as well as traffic signal changes to accommodate the second right turn lane. Be alert to the possibility of delays. (Completion: Spring 2022)

Wise County

Shawnee Avenue bridge replacement: Due to the replacement of the Shawnee Avenue bridge in Big Stone Gap, the bridge is closed. Use caution in this area and pay close attention to detour signs. (Completion: late 2021)

Route 83: Be alert to the possibility of delays along Route 83 in Wise and Dickenson counties from the intersection of Route 631 (Mill Creek) near Pound to the Buchanan County line due to a project to add paved shoulders with rumble strips and improve guardrail along Route 83. Be alert to flaggers and pilot vehicles leading motorists through the work zone. (Completion: early December 2021)

Wythe County

*****Route 617 (Kimberlin Road):** A pipe replacement project will close a portion of Route 617 (Kimberlin Road) in Wythe County from 9 a.m. Monday, September 27 until 5 p.m. October 29. The project will be located 1.6 miles from Route 735 and at the intersection of Route 680. Plan alternate routes while work is underway. (Completion: October 29)

Route 664 (Glade Road) bridge: Due to replacement of the Route 664 (Glade Road) bridge over Reed Creek in Wythe County, the bridge is closed to traffic and will remain closed through spring 2022. Route 664 will be closed from .99-mile east of Route 711 to 1.06-mile east of Route 711. Be alert to detour signs that will be in place before the project begins. (Completion: Spring 2022)

(END)